

Denmark to offers fourth COVID-19 shot to some

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A fourth COVID-19 vaccine dose will be offered to nursing home residents and people age 50 and over in Denmark later this year, the prime minister said Wednesday.

The reason for the move is a rise in cases of the BA.5 coronavirus [variant](#) in Europe, and Denmark's government says it wants to move

swiftly to avoid potential restrictions or a lockdown.

"The infection has been on the rise for the past three weeks," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said. "That is why we are acting now."

She added that the swift move was aimed at taking care of older people and the vulnerable and to avoid the congestion of hospitals, shutdowns and restrictions and to keep the economy going.

Last week, the BA.5 variant accounted for 59% of the positive cases while the previous week it represented 32% of the cases, Health Minister Magnus Heunicke said. As of Wednesday, 1,958 cases were reported in Denmark and 249 people were hospitalized.

"These are staggering numbers, but they are low numbers compared to what we have tried before," said Heunicke, adding that while the variant is more contagious, it doesn't cause more serious illness.

The shot will first be given to those living in nursing homes starting Sept. 15 and then those over 50 from Oct. 1. Vulnerable people also can get a vaccine by contacting their [general practitioner](#), said the head of the Danish Health Authority, Søren Brostrøm. Nursing home staff will also be offered a fourth shot.

Frederiksen said it is the Danish [health](#) authorities' assessment that 2.5 million people would be offered revaccination during the fall.

She added that with the knowledge Denmark has now, "we do not see an autumn and a winter with major restrictions and closures."

"All we do now is to avoid the shutdowns," Heunicke said.

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